



JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NATIONAL GUARD  
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DCNG-CG

30 November 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR All DC National Guard Military Personnel

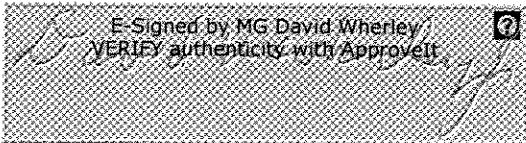
SUBJECT: Relationships between Military Personnel of Different Ranks and Fraternization

Reference: AR 600-20, *Army Command Policy*, dated 13 May 2002, and AFI 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, dated 1 May 1999.

- 1) I expect all military members of the District of Columbia National Guard to abide by the letter and spirit of their respective regulation or instruction regarding professional relationships and fraternization.
- 2) Military Personnel of all ranks meet and associate with each other in many settings both on and off-duty. These meetings foster the trust and confidence necessary for mission accomplishment. Soldiers and airmen associating with one another are governed in part by "rank" relationships, which are a basic requirement for maintenance of good order and discipline. Personal relationships become a matter of official concern when they adversely affect, or have the reasonable potential to adversely affect the military organization by eroding morale, good order, discipline, respect for authority, unit cohesion or mission accomplishment.
- 3) The following is a summary of the applicable policy on this subject. In the following paragraphs, the term officer includes both commissioned and warrant officers. The military policy on relationships between military personnel also applies to different gender and same gender relationships. While the specific prohibitions in the Army and Air Force regulations are not written exactly the same, the principles are the same.
  - a) Unprofessional Relationships. Relationships are unprofessional, whether pursued on or off-duty, when they detract from the authority of superiors or result in, or reasonably create the appearance of, favoritism, misuse of office or position, or the abandonment of organizational goals for personal interests. Unprofessional relationships can exist between officers, between enlisted members, between officers and enlisted members, and between military personnel and civilian employees or contractor personnel. Fraternization is one form of unprofessional relationship and is a recognized offense under Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).
  - b) Fraternization. Fraternization, as defined by the Manual for Courts-Martial, is a personal relationship between an officer and an enlisted member that violates the customary bounds of acceptable behavior in the military and prejudices good order and discipline, discredits the armed services, or operates to the personal disgrace or dishonor of the officer involved.
- 4) Relationships between military personnel of different ranks are prohibited if they:
  - a) Compromise, or appear to compromise, the integrity of supervisory authority of the chain of command.
  - b) Cause actual or perceived partiality or unfairness.
  - c) Involve, or appear to involve, the improper use of rank or position for personal gain.
  - d) Are, or appear to be, exploitative or coercive in nature.
  - e) Create an actual or clearly predictable adverse impact on discipline, authority, morale or the ability of the command to accomplish its mission.

- 5) Fraternization between officers and enlisted personnel is prohibited. Accordingly:
- a) Officers will not engage, on a personal basis, in business relationships with enlisted personnel. This prohibition does not apply to landlord/tenant or one-time transactions. It does apply to borrowing or lending money, commercial solicitation, and any other type of on-going financial or business relationship. In the case of the Army/Air National Guard personnel, this prohibition does not apply to on-going business relationships that exist due to their civilian occupation or employment.
  - b) Officers will not gamble with enlisted personnel.
  - c) Officers will not share living accommodations with enlisted members except when reasonably required by military operations.
  - d) Officers Will Not Engage in Sexual Relations with or Date Enlisted Members. Dating includes not only traditional, prearranged, social engagements between two members, but also includes more contemporary social activities that would reasonably be perceived to be a substitute for traditional dating. This prohibition does not apply to personal relationships between members of the National Guard when the relationship primarily exists due to civilian acquaintanceship, unless the individuals are on active duty or Full-time National Guard duty (other than annual training). Military personnel and leaders share responsibility, however, for ensuring that these relationships do not interfere with good order and discipline. Commanders will ensure that personal relationships, which exist between military personnel of different ranks emanating from their civilian careers, will not influence training, readiness, or personnel actions.
  - e) Officer/Enlisted Marriages. When evidence of fraternization exists, the fact that an officer and enlisted member subsequently marry does not preclude appropriate command action based on the prior fraternization. The fact that an officer is married to an enlisted member is not, by itself, evidence of misconduct. For example, some officer-enlisted marriages are created by the commissioning of civilians married to enlisted members, or by the commissioning of enlisted members married to other enlisted members. Other officer-enlisted marriages may result from force reductions and non-selection for promotion of some officers who then reverted to enlisted status. Regardless of how the officer-enlisted marriage came to be, married members are expected to respect all customs and courtesies observed by members of different grades when they are on duty, in uniform in public, or at official social functions.
- 6) Commanders should seek to prevent inappropriate or unprofessional relationships through proper training and leadership by example. If professional judgment and common sense indicate that a relationship is causing, or may reasonably result in, damage to morale, good order, discipline, unit cohesion or mission accomplishment, the commander or supervisor MUST take corrective action. Should inappropriate relationships occur, commanders have available a wide range of responses. These responses may include counseling, order to cease, reassignment, or adverse action. Potential adverse actions may include official reprimand, adverse evaluation reports, non-judicial punishment, separation, bar to reenlistment, promotion denial, or demotion. Commanders must carefully consider all of the facts and circumstances in reaching a disposition that is warranted, appropriate, and fair. Commanders and supervisors should consult with their supporting judge advocate whenever there are any questions about unprofessional relationships or fraternization.

E-Signed by MG David Wherley  
VERIFY authenticity with ApproveIt



DAVID F. WHERLEY, JR, Maj Gen, DCNG  
Commanding